

# CLOSTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

## COLLECTION POLICY

The Trustees of the Closter Public Library, in an effort to set forth clearly the library's philosophy and goals in regard to the selection, acquisition and deletion of library materials, have adopted the following policies in regard to the selection of children's and adult materials, the deletion of older materials and the disposition of public questions or complaints about such matters.

At the outset, The Trustees wish to state that they are in agreement with the **ALA LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS** and its adopted interpretations and the **FREEDOM TO READ STATEMENT**. These documents appear as an addenda to this policy and are incorporated in it.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Collection Development Policy is to provide guidelines for the selection, acquisition and weeding of all library materials. Additionally, the policy provides a vehicle for the continuous evaluation of the library collection as a whole.

### GENERAL POLICY

The Collection Development Policy has been unanimously adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Closter Public Library to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which selections are made. The selection goal of the Closter Public Library will be to provide a balance multifaceted collection in the education spirit of the public library movement and in the democratic traditions of our nation.

1. Books and other library materials are selected on the basis of literary, educational, informational, and recreational value. The Library Director is ultimately responsible for developing the collections of the library. Authority may be delegated to appropriate staff members responsible for various areas of the library (i.e. Children's Librarian, AV Librarian).

2. No title is excluded on the basis of moral, racial, religious, or political prejudice. Such actions would constitute an abrogation of the rights of the community and the responsibility of the library. Titles are selected, within the limitations of the budget, on the basis of favorable critical review in widely recognized media outlets. Suggestions from patrons are encouraged and will be given due consideration.

3. The Director will review written requests for the removal of specific titles. The Director will be responsible for determining the retention or withdrawal of challenged titles. Requests for appeal may be requested of the Library Board.

4. The Library endorses the American Library Association's Freedom to Read statement, The Library Bill of Rights, and the statements on Labeling Library Materials, Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks, and Free Access to Libraries for Minors. (appendices)

## **CRITERIA OF SELECTION**

In general, the Closter Public Library will select materials that meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. The item is authoritative and current
2. The item is of high quality
3. The item is in demand
4. The item is potentially useful, valuable or of interest
5. The item is needed to fill a gap in the collection

Criteria for selection shall apply to weeding as well. Weeding is discussed in a section below.

## **SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION**

The library seeks to collect popular materials on a reading level suitable to the general public and in a variety of formats. Emphasis is placed on acquiring materials of wide-ranging interest that reflect a variety of perspectives. The library does not collect scholarly or highly specialized materials typically found in large college or university libraries.

With the exception of local history materials, collections are not retained for archival purposes. Fiction and subject collections are routinely evaluated for retention.

Collecting emphasis may change according to popular demand. For example, additional funding and shelf space may be allocated toward computer manuals to meet an increasing need for those materials.

The range of materials available to patrons is not limited to the holdings of the Closter Public Library. Please refer to Reciprocal Borrowing and Interlibrary Loan.

## **BUDGET ALLOCATION**

Collection development emphasis may change annually. The allocation of funding for collection development is determined by the adoption of the annual library budget by the Library Board. The Director, with the assistance of staff, prepares a suggested budget.

## **METHOD OF SELECTION**

The primary method of selection shall be printed reviews in established selection including Booklist, Kirkus Review, Library Journal, New York Times Book Review, Publisher's Weekly, School Library Journal, and VOYA. Reviews may also be used from other general interest media outlets such as radio or Internet-based publications. Publisher's catalogs are also considered.

## **MULTIPLE COPIES**

To meet high demand for popular titles in a timely manner, it is necessary to purchase multiple copies of a work. Typically, the number of copies purchased is based upon a ratio of copies available to the number of people waiting on reserve.

## **AUDIO/VISUAL MATERIALS**

Spoken word audio books will be purchased to meet the demand for popular and classic titles in audio format. Audio books are offered in a variety of formats. The library will not be bound to any or emergent format, but will attempt to provide a variety from which to choose. Due to budgetary limitations it may not be possible to purchase the same title in multiple formats.

Visual materials are also purchased to meet the recreational and informational needs of the community. A variety of popular, classic, foreign motion pictures are collected as are television programs, documentaries and non-fiction subjects. The musical performance collection will consist of a variety of categories.

Audio/visual materials will be purchased both centrally and locally. Items purchased locally will use standards reflecting book selection.

## **PERIODICALS**

The library subscribes to a wide variety of popular magazines for their informational content. The collection is not comprehensive in its subject coverage. Titles are selected to meet local demand and interest. The paper collection is substantially supplemented through periodical databases and the Emagazine subscription. The paper collection is not archival and back issues are limited to the current year or less. Back issue content is widely available through electronic databases. A limited number of newspapers are purchased to cover local, regional and national news.

## **DATABASES**

The Closter Public Library offers remote login capability from home. Through participation in cooperative purchasing agreements and local purchasing power, the library makes available several databases to the public. Within the limits of budgetary constraints, the library seeks to expand information available to the public by subscribing to new and existing online forums.

## **CHILDREN'S MATERIALS**

Juvenile materials are purchased in a similar manner as the adult collection. Early childhood development is considered when adding items.

## **LOCAL HISTORY**

The library attempts to collect materials that document the history of the Borough of Closter. Materials to be collected include: books, maps, pamphlets, photographs, postcards, diaries, ephemera, and works of art created by or published by Closter residents...

Local history items may be acquired through purchase or through gifts.

## **RECIPROCAL BORROWING & INTERLIBRARY LOAN**

The Closter Public Library is a member of the Bergen County Cooperative Library System (BCCLS). BCCLS member libraries cooperatively share their resources through a reciprocal borrowing agreement. The consortium shares a computer network and a common library catalog. Closter residents may borrow directly from any BCCLS library. Local restrictions on some materials may apply. Items may also be requested for delivery through the library catalog.

Apart from participation in the BCCLS organization, the library may request items from college and university libraries through the state interlibrary loan system. Interlibrary loans are facilitated by the library staff on behalf of patrons.

## **WEEDING**

Weeding is the selection of items for withdrawal from the collection. Weeding shall be done on a regular basis in conjunction with systematic collection evaluation.

Items shall be weeded according to the evaluation of the Director and staff responsible for the collection. Criteria for weeding include:

1. Usefulness of material
2. Condition of material

3. Last circulation of material

4. Age of material

Circulation of material shall by no means be the single determining factor in the weeding process, especially in the area of non-fiction. The high circulation of an outdated item does not necessarily indicate that the item should be retained, but possibly that the item should be replaced with a more current title.

Classic fiction titles in disrepair will be considered for replacement. Non-fiction books in poor physical condition will be considered for repair or replacement if content remain accurate and useful.

Weeding procedures shall combine the criteria of established weeding methods as well as the judgment of the Director and staff.

## **GIFTS**

The library prefers gifts to be made in the form of cash donations. This enables staff the greatest flexibility in selecting appropriate materials. The library reserves the right to decline any donation of materials. If a donation of materials is accepted it is understood that those materials may be added to the collection, sold at periodic book sales, or discarded at the discretion of the Director.

The library will provide a receipt stating the quantity and type of items donated. The library will not provide an appraisal of the dollar value of any material donation. The library is NOT allowed by law to assign a monetary value to donated items.

## **RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS**

It is the responsibility of a free public library to provide materials that reflect a wide range of viewpoints on controversial or debatable subjects. The existence of an item within the collection does not imply an endorsement of the author's or artist's viewpoint. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents. Items will not be sequestered.

Opinions on the collection are welcomed from the public; however, final decisions will be governed by this policy.

Closter residents seeking the removal of materials from the library must submit requests in writing. A reconsideration form appended to this policy must be completed and returned to the Library Director. The Director will meet with the staff member responsible for selecting the item in question and the merit of the request will be considered. The Director will make a decision regarding the disposition of the item and will provide a written response to the person initiating the request. The Director will inform the Board of Trustees of all requests for reconsideration.

Should the person initiating the request remain unsatisfied with the decision of the Director, an appeal may be made for a hearing before the Board of Trustees. A written request for appeal shall be addressed to the President of the Board. The Board reserves the right to limit the length of presentation and number of speakers at the hearing. The Board will determine whether the request for reconsideration has been handled in accordance with the established policies and procedures of the Closter Public Library. On the basis of this determination, the Board may vote to uphold or override the decision of the Director

## DONATION FORM

(Please read, complete and return with donation)

I have read the GIFT DONATION POLICY and understand that the library reserves the right to accept or decline any items depending on the suitability of the material.

I understand that any items declined may be diverted to another use i.e. book sale or disposed of as the library sees fit.

Materials donated to the local history collection determined inappropriate to the needs of the collection will be returned to the donor if so requested.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## **PUBLIC COMPLAINT POLICY**

Complaints about materials in the Closter Public Library collection will be accepted from Closter residents or Closter Library cardholders who have read the material in question **only**.

The following procedure should be followed:

1. Complainant must complete and **sign** the complaint form.
2. The form must be submitted, whether in person or by mail to the Director
3. On receipt of the completed, signed form, the Director with two other experienced, certified Public Librarians will read the material, gather all pertinent information and reviews on the material and make the decision as to whether the item meets the criteria cited in the *Selection Policy* under the category of adult, children's, etc.
4. The review committee shall complete its work within 60 days of the receipt of the complaint and notify, in writing, the complainant of its decision.

The complaint form is attached.



**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY  
MATERIALS (CLOSTER RESIDENTS ONLY)**

AUTHOR\_\_\_\_\_

TITLE\_\_\_\_\_

PUBLISHER/DATE\_\_\_\_\_

COMPLAINANT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
(Closter Residents ONLY)

ADDRESS\_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL\_\_\_\_\_

COMPLAINT REPRESENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
(himself/organization)\_\_\_\_\_

1. To what in the book or material do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, illustrations, etc.
2. What do you feel might be the result of using this material?
3. For which age group might you recommend this material?
4. Did you read, listen to or watch the entire material?
5. What do you believe is the theme of the material?
6. What material of equal value would you recommend, if any?
7. Are you aware of professional evaluation of this material?
8. Is there anything good or valuable in the material in your opinion?
9. Comments

Signature\_\_\_\_\_DATE\_\_\_\_\_

# Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939.

Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; and January 23, 1980;

inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996, by the ALA Council.

# The Freedom to Read Statement

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The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group

has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

*A Joint Statement by:*

[American Library Association](#)  
[Association of American Publishers](#)

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

[American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression](#)  
[The Association of American University Presses, Inc.](#)  
[The Children's Book Council](#)  
[Freedom to Read Foundation](#)  
[National Association of College Stores](#)  
[National Coalition Against Censorship](#)  
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